

Peck's Bad Boy in an Airship

BY HON. GEORGE W. PECK

HE GOES UP IN THE CLOUDS

The accident by the wrecking of the freight train on which my chum and myself were touring the country, viewing the scenery through an auger hole in the side of a box car, was a darn sight worse than I thought it was. What a come down it was for me, who have always traveled with pa. In a parlor car, to have to ride in a box car, with live stock, and feast on dog biscuit, instead of ordering from the menu in a dining car.

No one likes the luxuries of foreign travel any better than I do, but that freight car experience showed me that we do not know when we are well off, but when a boy goes out into the world to make his fortune, and cuts loose from home ties, and pie, and bath tubs, and a warm bed, and victuals such as mother makes, and winds up in a wreck, under a horse that does not know the name of, he is going some.

When we got to the hospital a lawyer, who had chased the ambulance on a motorcycle, retained me as his client and offered to sue the railway company for a million dollars' damage, and he would furnish all the evidence, and take half of what he got for his fee. I thought it was a good proposition, and probably I can own a railroad if I take stock for my damages, but I shall take nothing but money, and let my lawyer have the railroad stock. Gee, but a lawyer is the greatest man on earth. This one has been riding alongside the railroad track on a motorcycle for years, waiting for an accident, and when he selected me for a client he just cried for joy, and he has drawn a complaint against the railroad company that is a work of art.

When he read it to me, and I saw how I had been broken up and damaged by the soulless corporation, and how my promising career had been ruined, I never was so overcome in my life. While I was not hurt any, except where the horse laid on me and squeezed my dog biscuits in my stomach so my backbone was polished by the chewed biscuit, the lawyer had the doctors at the hospital put my legs and arms in plaster of paris casts, and had my body done up in splints and bandages, and my face covered with strips of court plaster, until nothing but my mouth was in working order, and I wore out a nurse bringing me things to eat, and I never enjoyed myself more in my life than I did in that hospital, just

to be shown every break in my anatomy.

Well, things went on this way for several days, and I was getting nervous from the plaster casts on me.

I didn't like it very much when the railway lawyer offered to settle for \$5, claiming I was a tramp stealing a ride, but he brought my chum to see me, and my chum, who had his neck twisted around by a bale of hay falling on him, settled for \$20, and so I did the same, and when the nurses were asleep in the afternoon, my chum and me left the hospital with 40 good dollars, and started across the bridge

going to have us arrested for highway robbery, but I told him I wouldn't have known what to do with so much money if we had kanoodled the railroad out of a million dollars, in addition to a free ride on its palatial freight car, and besides it would be cheating, and the lawyer drew a long sigh and told us to get out of the country and he would continue the suit on the ground that we had been injured so bad that we became insane and jumped into the river, and he offered to throw us in the river, but we jumped on a street car and went across to St. Louis in search of the park where the balloon man was that had offered us a job riding in balloons.

We found the man and he said they were going to start for somewhere the next morning and we could go along, my chum in one balloon and I in an-

other, and all we would have to do was to throw out ballast when told to do so, and open cans of stuff to eat, and for us to buy thick sweaters, and show up at nine o'clock in the morning, and write the address where we wanted our remains sent to in case we were killed, and pin the address on our sweaters.

It wasn't cheerful and my chum and I talked it over until late that night, and I am sorry to say my chum showed a streak of yellow, and he confessed to me that he was a coward and came from a family of cowards, and that he didn't have sand enough to go up in a balloon, and he would let me go up, but he would rather stay on the ground, where he could feel the earth with his feet, and watch the balloons.

He said that people who go up in balloons were either crazy, or had met with some disappointment in life, and took the balloon method of committing suicide, and he would aldestep balloons, and if the time ever came when he was tired of life, he would take a job firing on an engine, or go into burglary, or get in love with some old man's wife, or marry a chorus girl, or something that would be fatal, but on land.

Gee, but I was disappointed in my chum. He had been in a reform school, and I thought he had gravel in his crop, but he proved to have the chills, and so I went to the balloon man in the morning alone, and told him I had made my will, and was ready to go up to heaven or down to Helena, Arkansas, any minute he was ready, but my chum had weakened and gone glimmering.

I got in the basket and looked things over, and jumped out and in several times, and asked questions of the two men who were to go up in it, and they seemed pleased that I was not afraid, and they asked me if I thought my father would kick if I was killed or lost at sea, or anything, and I told them from my last conversation with pa I thought he would find it as a kindness if they should find it convenient to spill me out somewhere or lose me, and when they landed, if they could make affidavit that I had

CITY'S BUSIEST MAN

MULTIFARIOUS ACTIVITIES OF
CAPITOL SUPERINTENDENT.

At Least Fifteen Places of Responsibility Filled by Elliott Woods—Music His Chief Recreation—How He Spends His Days.

Washington.—"I do not know how Elliott Woods could be overworked unless he was hitched double with a mule," "Uncle Joe" Cannon recently remarked to the superintendent of the capitol, recognized as the busiest man in Washington. Woods is heels over head in work every winter, but it is in the hottest part of the summer that his energy has the most strenuous calls made upon it, so that everything may be in shape for the reconvening of congress and that all the plans made by the national legislators may be faithfully carried out.

Woods has four separate offices and fills at least 15 places, all of which have responsibilities and require his official attention. His engagement book is more voluminous and comprehensive than that of the most popular debutante. First of all, he is in charge of the whole capitol and the new office buildings of the senate and house. He belongs to all the commissions appointed by congress to look after the selection of sites and construction of monuments and memorials. He is engaged in drawing up the plans of the proposed Lincoln memorial, the plans for the new buildings for the departments of state, justice and commerce and labor, and he is also working on the design for the new pediment to be placed on the west wing of the capitol. Besides, he is the superintendent in charge of the installation of the under-



ground railroad from the capitol to the various office buildings, and he also has to decide what sort of contrivance shall be used to make it possible for members of the house seated in their offices to hear all that is being said on the floor of the house.

It is Woods who is responsible for the greenness and freshness of the capitol lawns and terraces; he is the author of all improvements inside the building; he is at the head of the work on the new heating, lighting and power plant, which will cost \$1,500,000, and he is also in charge of the work on the \$200,000 addition to the District of Columbia courthouse. All these things he does with the greatest modesty and good humor.

He is an early riser, of necessity rather than inclination. A cup of coffee about six o'clock is his breakfast, and there immediately ensues a mad rush for his first office, which is in a building by itself to the south of the capitol. He used to drive horses on his daily rounds, but the beasts were not endowed with his energy, so they have long since been replaced by an automobile which usually exceeds the speed limit some miles. After he has heard the early morning complaints, read all the mail and given his daily orders to the assistants at his first office, he visits his "den" in the house office building. There he hurries the completion of that splendid structure and betakes himself to his third headquarters in the senate office building. His fourth stop is his main office in the capitol. He reaches here about one o'clock, after a morning which has sped all too rapidly. Some time between one and two o'clock, when he has a spare five minutes, he eats luncheon. He does not attempt pre-digested foods, but eats five minutes' worth and then stops.

The rest of the day he is supervising the work that is going on about him, talking to the numerous visitors that besiege him, being nice to foreign architects who view the capitol and making his plans for the next day. After a good dinner his chief recreation is music. He has composed some creditable strains and hopes to have a complete opera of his own produced next winter. The piano is his forte, but he plays the violin and several other instruments with sure facility.



The People Were Yelling as We Shot Up Into the Air, and I Saw My Chum Sitting on a Dray.



He Said It Was Hard for a Deserving Lawyer to Be Knocked Out of a Million Dollar Fee.

eating and being petted by good looking nurses.

My lawyer told me to groan all the time when anybody was present, and when a railroad lawyer called at the hospital to take an invoice of my wounds, and my lawyer was present to see that I groaned plenty, it was all I could do to keep from laughing, but my lawyer would run a paper knife into my slats every time I quit groaning, so we were working the railroad all right, and the hospital doctors, who were going to have a share in the money, made a list of my broken bones, and the railroad lawyer wanted

for St. Louis, to find the air ships.

We were sitting down on a railroad track, at the east entrance to the bridge, and I had taken off my clothes, and was breaking the plaster of paris off my limbs, when my lawyer came along on his motorcycle, on the way to the hospital to make me groan some more, and when he saw us he had a fainting spell, and when I told him we had been discharged as cured, he said it was hard for a deserving lawyer to be knocked out of a half million dollar fee by a dumb fool client who didn't know enough to look out for his own interests, and he was

other, and all we would have to do was to throw out ballast when told to do so, and open cans of stuff to eat, and for us to buy thick sweaters, and show up at nine o'clock in the morning, and write the address where we wanted our remains sent to in case we were killed, and pin the address on our sweaters.

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He said that people who go up in balloons were either crazy, or had met with some disappointment in life, and took the balloon method of committing suicide, and he would aldestep balloons, and if the time ever came when he was tired of life, he would take a job firing on an engine, or go into burglary, or get in love with some old man's wife, or marry a chorus girl, or something that would be fatal, but on land.

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WILL TAP VAST COAL FIELDS.

New Railroads to Northwest Will Make 45,000,000,000 Tons Accessible.

Forty-five billion tons of coal, included in the greatest coal fields in western North America, will be available as soon as railroad extensions now in progress tapping the "Brows" Nest Pass region are completed going far towards averting the predicted fuel famine, says the Technical World.

This vast storehouse is located in a rectangle 150 by 200 miles in extent, comprising 30,000 square miles or 19,200,000 acres.

To put this tract in direct communication with the outside world, two opposing engineering parties are strenuously at work. D. C. Corbin, president of the Spokane International railroad, has secured a charter from the provincial government of British Columbia for a railroad connecting with the Canadian Pacific east of Michel, B. C., and extending in a southerly direction 14 miles. Construction gangs are now in the field rushing work. This line will open coal lands in 17 sections, a total of 10,800 acres, for which the company holds crown grants from the provincial government of British Columbia.

Although but a few miles from the mouth of the river Thames, noted for its fogs, the atmosphere of Herts lay, England, is rarely obscured.